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Rehabilitating an Empire: Humanitarian Collusion with the Colonial State during the Kenyan Emergency, c.1954-1960

In September 1954, at the height of a bloody war between British colonial forces and the Kenyan anticolonial movement, Alan Lennox-Boyd, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, received an offer of help from an unexpected source. Brigadier Tony Boyce, the Chairman of the Save the Children Fund, suggested that humanitarian organisations should carry out what he termed an "Operation Anvil for children" in Nairobi.[1] Replicating the Operation Anvil launched by the British army and colonial police, which involved the capture and imprisonment of suspected Mau Mau rebels, Boyce suggested that humanitarian organisations should "round up" children aged between ten and seventeen, and place them in residential schools where they would be "re-educated to support the colonial cause".[2] Boyce also envisaged a network of kindergartens where the children of Mau Mau suspects would be provided with milk and medical care, to "soften" their mothers' attitudes to British rule.[3] The Kenyan emergency presented the Save the Children Fund with an "opportunity to establish an active partnership between the government and voluntary workers… in the colonial territories".[4]

The Save the Children Fund was not the only aid organization enticed by the 'opportunity' presented by the Kenyan Emergency. As postwar reconstruction projects wound down in Europe, many aid organisations sought new roles. In 1948, the British Red Cross transferred a number of its workers from Europe to Malaya during another colonial emergency. Red Cross nurses had participated in a campaign against anticolonial resistance, attempting to

[1] 'Notes on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room at 4.30 pm on 17 November 1954 (with Brigadier Boyce, Save the Children Fund)', CO 859/660, United Kingdom National Archives (UKNA).
[2] Ibid; The SCF: Report on Welfare Development and Projected Developments in Kenya, 16 May 1955, CO 859/660.
[3] Boyce to Lennox-Boyd, 1 June 1955, CO 859/660, UKNA.
[4] Draft Speech for Mr Airey Neave at the Annual Meeting of the Save the Children Fund (1954), CO 859/658, UKNA.

win the 'hearts and minds' of Malayans through education and sanitation projects. It seemed to Red Cross Overseas Branch Director Joan Whittington that such methods could be redeployed in Kenya.[5] For the British Red Cross, as for Save the Children, the Kenyan emergency was a part of a wider reorientation from postwar Europe to the decolonizing British Empire, where they used their credibility as 'international' agents to divert criticism from colonial barbarity.

This article examines humanitarian collusion with the colonial state during the Kenyan emergency, analysing how organizations that claimed to exemplify the progressive internationalism of the post-war period colluded with colonial violence. Aid organizations were deeply implicated in projects for women and children that sought to weaken anticolonial resistance, importing new humanitarian expertise developed in wartime Europe and adapting it to racist, colonial norms. Thus, humanitarian organizations lent credence to the myth that rehabilitation in Kenya was a progressive programme enacted by a liberal empire to modernise its subjects, rather than a ruthless attempt to stymy anticolonial resistance. In this case, postwar humanitarian internationalism did not challenge, but enabled, colonial brutality.

In the aftermath of the Second World War British imperialism was seeking to repurpose itself as a developmental and democratising force, in line with new international norms.[6] It was at this moment that colonial violence reached its zenith in a series of wars of decolonization (so-called 'emergencies') that raged from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s.[7] In Kenya, a state of Emergency was declared in 1952, as Mau Mau guerrillas engaged in an insurgency campaign that aimed to end British rule in Kenya. The colonial government embarked upon a

[5] Mercy Phillips, Notes on a conversation between Joan Whittington and Eric Piddle, BRC monthly report, Nyambeni and Igembee Divisions, Meru District, December 1955, OR MOH/12/118, Kenyan National Archives (KNA); Tim Harper, The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya (Cambridge, 1999), p.66.
[6] Joanna Lewis, "The British Empire in World History", in Colonialism and welfare: social policy and the British imperial legacy, ed. James Midgley and David Piachaud (Cheltenham, 2011), pp.24-32; John Darwin, Britain and Decolonization: The Retreat from Empire in the Postwar World (Basingstoke, 1988), pp.141-146; 244-246.
[7] Martin Shipway, Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of Colonial Empires (Oxford, 2008), pp.140-172.

programme of incarceration and "rehabilitation" to "cleanse" suspected Mau Mau of their anticolonial beliefs, in which insurgents were detained, propagandised and often tortured.[8]

In recent years, two distinct literatures have examined the two faces of the postwar British Empire. New histories of international order have demonstrated the ideological convergence between twentieth-century imperialism and the ideology of internationalism.[9] Meanwhile, a burgeoning literature on imperial violence has revealed the illiberal repression at the heart of the 'liberal' British Empire.[10] Through an examination of humanitarianism at the end of empire, this article places these two emerging literatures (one on the intersection of internationalism and imperialism, and the other on colonial violence) in conversation.

The emerging literature on international aid in the twentieth-century has shown how internationalist humanitarian tradition emerged from colonial empires (most often the British Empire), and continued to embody and propagate imperial norms after decolonization. In this literature, humanitarian organisations are characterised as 'imperial' in the sense that they shared attitudes, ideas and even personnel with the official machinery of empire.[11] Aside from recent examinations of the role of the ICRC during colonial emergencies in Africa, we still know little about how international aid originations interacted with imperialism as both an ideology and a set of violent practices.[12] Through an examination of the Save the Children

[8] Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, Mau Mau Detainee: The Account by a Kenya African of his Experiences in the Detention Camps 1953-1960 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp.107-119; Wunyabari Maloba, Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt (Indiana University Press, 1998), pp.139-142; C. Elkins, Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya (London, 2005), pp.91-120; David Anderson, Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and End of Empire (New York, 2005), pp.297-306.

9 M. Mazower, No Enchanted Palace, The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations (Princeton N.J., 2009); Susan Pedersen, The Guardians, The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire (Oxford, 2015).

[10] Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Wars: the End of Britain's Asian Empire* (London, 2007); Michael Burleigh, Small Wars, Far Away Places. The Genesis of the Modern World, 1945-65 (Oxford, 2013).

[11] Michael Barnett, Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism (Ithaca, NY, 2011); Matthew Hilton, 'Charity, Decolonization and Development: The Case of the Starehe Boys School, Nairobi', Past & Present, Volume 233, Issue 1, 1 November 2016, pp.227-267.

[12] Fabian Klose, Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence: The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria (Philadelphia, 2014), pp.61-78; Pringle, 'Humanitarianism, race, and denial: The International Committee of the Red Cross and Kenya's Mau Mau rebellion, 1952-60', History Workshop Journal, 84 (2017): 89-107.

Fund and the British Red Cross in the Kenyan Emergency, this article reveals how, by aiding in the so-called 'rehabilitation' of the Kikuyu, humanitarianism became a vehicle for rehabilitating the image of British imperialism.

I.

When Save the Children's chairman Tony Boyce arrived at Nairobi airport in September 1954, he walked into the midst of a moral panic about the state of Kikuyu youth. Rapid urbanisation and stringent vagrancy laws had led to rising prosecution rates of young men, who had been coming to Nairobi in search of work since the end of the Second World War.[13] Though the majority of prosecutions related to travelling without a pass or petty criminality, colonial officials used rising crime rates as evidence of the influence of the Mau Mau movement in urban youth.[14] Many Mau Mau fighters were under twenty-five, and the colonial government claimed that male youths were a 'soft target' for anticolonial propaganda.[15] Children as young as four were alleged to be acting as runners for messages and supplies passed between Mau Mau insurgents in Nairobi and the surrounding countryside.[16]

Prosecution rates for apolitical crimes such as theft and vagrancy sharply rose after the State of emergency was declared in Kenya in 1952.[17] In the dislocation and upheaval caused by the mass incarceration of 900,000 suspected Mau Mau, and the chaos of the "villagization" schemes that forcibly relocated Kikuyu communities, many left for Nairobi, accelerating the

[13]Andrew Burton and Paul Ocobock, 'The "Travelling Native: Vagrancy and Colonial Control in British East Africa', in A. L. Beier and P. Ocobock (eds), Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective (Athens OH, 2008), pp.285-287.
[14] Secretary of state for Kenya (UK) to Evelyn Baring, August 23rd 1956, BZ/8, KNA.
[15] John Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, Poverty and Civic Virtue,' in Bruce Berman (ed.) Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and in Africa (Ohio, 1992), pp.360-8.
[16] "Children Aiding Mau Mau", Daily Telegraph September 30th 1954; in Tabitha Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905-1963 (Athens OH, 1987), an interviewee claims that children were not acting as runners until the age of 8. p. 147.
[17] G.W. Griffin to Ministry of Community Development, "Study of the Youth Problem among the Gikuyu, Embu, and Meru Tribes", November 17th 1957, AB/16/11, KNA.

urban flight that had been a feature of the young Kikuyu experience for decades.[18] The vast farms owned by white settlers had led to severe land shortages for Africans. Kikuyu men, who were unable to attain the resources needed to begin new family units and become economically independent from their elders, felt this land shortage acutely. In frustration, many young men left the reserves designated by the colonial state as Kikuyu farmland for the city.[19]

Rather than reforming land allocation, the colonial government sought to remake colonial subjects, incarcerating suspected Mau Mau for "rehabilitation". Boyce argued that no attempt to remake the Kikuyu would be complete without a concerted effort to rehabilitate children. His first suggestion of "Operation Anvil for children", was rejected by the Colonial Secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, on the grounds that rounding up Kenyan women and children by force for screening and imprisonment would lead to an international outcry.[20] However, his contention that remaking youth held the key to remaking society found a powerful advocate in Thomas Askwith, the Colonial Commissioner for Community Development and a key architect of the adult rehabilitation scheme.

Askwith, the former principle of a development training academy founded and funded by the Colonial state, favoured a liberal, 'gentle' approach to rehabilitation. The Kikuyu, he believed, were caught between tradition and modernity. As historian Paul Ocobock has argued, Askwith had come to view the emergency as a generational conflict produced by the psychological effects of missionary education and urbanization.[21] Drawing upon the work of psychiatrists and ethnographers such as Louis Leakey and J.C. Carothers, Askwith argued that

[18] Chloe Campbell, "Juvenile Delinquency in Colonial Kenya, 1900-1939", The Historical Journal, 45(1) (2002): 129-151; Abosede George, Making Modern Girls: A History of Girlhood, Labor, and Social Development in Colonial Lagos (Athens, OH, 2014), pp.174-5.
[19] Notes on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room at 4.30 pm on 17th November 1954 (with Brigadier Boyce, SCF), CO 859/660, British National Archives (UKNA); Erin Bell, ''A Most Horrifying Maturity in Crime': Age, Gender, and Juvenile Delinquency in Colonial Kenya During the Mau Mau Uprising', Atlantic Studies, 11(4) (2014): 480-1.
[20] Notes on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room at 4.30 pm on 17th November 1954 (with Brigadier Boyce, SCF), CO 859/660, UKNA.
[21] Paul Ocobock, An Uncertain Age: Making Manhood, Maturity, and Authority in Kenya, 1898-1978 (Athens OH, 2017), pp. 191-225

"tribal discipline has disappeared" due to the fact that young men were more educated than their elders.[22] Mau Mau, Askwith believed, was a symptom of the "disintegration" of a "whole generation", psychologically damaged by the absence of elder authority.[23] Boyce's diagnosis of juvenile delinquency fit neatly with Askwith's conception of the Mau Mau movement as one of psychological distress, rather than political grievance. Though their conception of Mau Mau hinged upon a racist view of "backwards" Kikuyu struggling with modernity, both Askwith and Boyce believed that remedies that the Save the Children Fund had pioneered for juvenile delinquents in a European context could be reconfigured for youth caught up in the Kenyan emergency.[24]

There were few institutions to deal with the youngest suspected Mau Mau. The Child Protection (Emergency Regulation) Act of 1954 decreed that unaccompanied minors in Nairobi should be sent to reserves or missionary orphanages.[25] However, the chaos of mass incarcerations and the overburdening of Nairobi municipal courts meant that many children and teenagers spent months in transit camps designed for 'screening' adults.[26] Children as young as seven were beaten by prison guards, often going days without food, shelter, clothes and blankets.[27] Living in such conditions and close to suspected adult Mau Mau, it seemed to Boyce inevitable that these boys would be "contaminated by Mau Mau" ideas.[28]

Within the colonial administration there was confusion about the age at which youths ceased to be protected by the 1952 legislation and became legally adult.[29] Consequently, the

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[22] 'Youth Training', November 7th 1954, FCO 141/6269, UKNA; see also Thomas Askwith, From Mau Mau to Harambee: Memoirs and Memoranda of Colonial Kenya (Cambridge, 1995), pp.103-6; Louis Leakey, Mau Mau and the Kikuyu (London, 1952); J.C. Carothers, The Psychology of Mau Mau (Nairobi, 1954).
[23] 'Youth Training', November 7th 1954, FCO 141/6269, UKNA
[24] See also Erik Linstrum, Ruling Minds: Psychology in the British Empire (Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA, 2016), pp.155-188.
[25] Colony and Protectorate of Kenya Government Notice No. 16, Emergency (Welfare of Children) Regulations, 1954, in The Kenya Gazette, 8 March 1955, p.188.
[26] Letter to Boyce from J.R. Gregory, Save the Children Kenya, Dec 6th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[27] 'Account of Juveniles in Latanga Camp', Eileen Fletcher to Miss Shepherd December 23rd 1954, Archives and Special Collection, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Conference of British Missionary Society Papers (CBMS) 278; Eileen Fletcher, Truth About Kenya: An Eye-Witness Account (London, 1956).
[28] Boyce to Lennox-Boyd, September 27th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[29] Memorandum on Youth Crime, January 14th 1957, AB/2/66, KNA.

problem of juvenile delinquency was passed around a number of departments, all reluctant to accept responsibility.[30] The Save the Children Fund had recently had its own debates about the distinction between childhood and youth, raising its own age limit for intervention from 14 to 18, as part of its wider shift from focusing on the bodies of children to treating their minds. In the interwar period, the fund drew upon Victorian religious and romantic discourses to categorise children as innocent and apolitical, focused on material succour. After 1945, having witnessing the weaponization of adolescence by totalitarian states, the Fund became interested in the political potency of 'youth' (broadly, ages 12-18). It sought to provide moral and material interventions that would steer an emotionally-damaged generation towards an adulthood of democratic citizenship, in an era of anxiety about the rising tide of communism.[31]

For Boyce, the Fund's new interest in youth, coupled with the Colonial state's limited provision for adolescents, provided an opportunity. The Save the Children Fund could enhance its public status by acting as an "agent of the government", and gain logistical support in a new context.[32] Partnership with Save the Children benefitted the colonial government too, providing welfare services while preserving empire on the cheap.[33] Humanitarian assistance also allowed the government to recast the meaning of colonial government and the Mau Mau struggle against it. Boyce linked the generational rupture in Kikuyu society, central to Askwith's view of the emergency, to a wider discourse of child psychology. Citing the work of Save the Children in Europe, Boyce sought to convince Askwith that that the crisis of adolescence was a global postwar phenomenon, of which youth criminality in Kenya was part, but with specific

[30] Thomas Askwith to Secretary for Local Government Health and Housing, January 9th 1956, MCO/LIA 89/2, KNA; "Vagrant Juveniles", Memorandum by the War Council, June 7th 1957, CO/822/1804, UKNA; "Juvenile Reception Centres", October 17th 1957, AB/2/74, KNA.

[31] On youth and communism, see Sarah Feildston, Raising the World: Child Welfare in the American Century (Boston MA, 2015) pp.78-107; on youth and democratic citizenship, see Jordanna Bailkin, The Afterlife of Empire (Berkeley CA, 2012), pp.23-55.

[32] Meeting held in the Secretary of State's room, November 17th 1954, CO 859/660; draft Speech for Mr Airey Neave, Conservative MP for Abingdon speaking on behalf of the Colonial Office, at the Annual Meeting of the Save the Children Fund (1954), CO 859/658, UKNA.

[33] Joanna Lewis, Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925-1952 (Athens OH, 2001), p.144.

racial and national inflections. Where, in Europe, juvenile delinquency arose from the breakdown of familial ties, in Kenya it was due to the disintegration of the tribe.[34]

Concern about the conditions of Kenyan youth, brought up with limited economic prospects and without the guidance of tribal elders, closely echoed similar panic about juvenile delinquency in postwar Europe. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a cadre of child psychologists and psychoanalysts such as Anna Freud and John Bowlby posited that children's 'attachment' to their parents (particularly their mothers) was the foremost predictor of healthy, mentally-stable adult life. In this context, the mass evacuations of children during the Second World War, and the orphaning or abandonment of children during the conflict, seemed to prefigure continent-wide social dislocation. The war generation, it was feared, would lead adult lives of criminality and further destabilise European politics.[35] A sharp spike in so-called juvenile delinquency seemed to confirm these fears.[36] As new borstals and reformatories were opened across the continent to contain young criminals, humanitarian organizations increasingly focused not on the trauma of war on children's bodies, but on their minds.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, social policy and humanitarian work within and beyond Europe was reconfigured to orientate provision for children within the family, and to recreate the structure of the family when parents were not available. Nascent European welfare states and postwar workforce policies conspired to push women back into the home to raise a generation of well-adjusted, emotionally-attached children. Where states themselves were not leading the drive for the creation of nuclear families, humanitarian organizations took up the slack. As Tara Zara and Sarah Feldstein have shown, American aid organizations sought to

[34] Commission consultative de l'enfance délinquante et socialement inadaptée, 21e Session du Commité executive, Mars 23-26 1955, AP 92.3.156, L'Archives d'état de Genève (AEG); C.S. Owen, Rehabilitation of Youth, April 23rd 1956, BZ/8/13, KNA.
[35] International Union for Child Welfare, third section of the executive committee, September 11-12th 1947, Geneva AP 92.1.32, AEG. See also Michal Shapira, The War Inside: Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Postwar Britain (Cambridge, 2013), pp.53-58.
[36] On this global 'crisis of youth', see Sarah Fishman, The Battle for Children: World War II, Youth Crime, and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century France (Boston MA, 2002), pp.1-3.

reconstruct Europe and 'modernize' societies in north-east Asia and Latin America via the promotion and preservation of nuclear family units. Working in the early stages of the Cold War, these organizations sought not only to prevent the creation of a new generation of juvenile delinquents, but to ward off totalitarianism.[37]

Save the Children seized upon the zeitgeist and proclaimed its own special interest and expertise in juvenile delinquency. Hosting a series of international conferences, Save the Children discussed best practice for the rehabilitation of delinquent youth and argued that institutions replicating the structure of nuclear families were the most likely to re-establish emotional stability.[38] To replicate the bond between youth and parents, Save the Children-sponsored reformatories organized juveniles into mixed age 'houses', each with their own leader, a trusted adult figure to act as a role model for discipline and support.[39] This system of prefects, a house system, and multi-layered structures of authority, though based on new psychoanalytic observations, closely replicated a far older British tradition: boarding school. Yet boarding school was based on the premise that growing up in proximity to parents undermined the psychological robustness of young men, while reformatories were a response to the problem created by the lack of parents' emotional guidance and authority.[40] Save the Children, an organization funded by aristocratic women in 1919, had become increasingly professionalised and masculine during its work with the British government during the Second World War.[41] By the mid-1950s, its leadership comprised upper-class, former military men, all educated at boarding schools. The rhetoric of reformatories and attachment allowed them to

[37] Tara Zahra, ''A Human Treasure': Europe's Displaced Children Between Nationalism and Internationalism in Post-war Reconstruction in Europe", Past and Present, 210(s6) (2011): 332-350; Fieldston, Raising the World.
[38] Report presented to the first congress of the UN for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Geneva, May 1955 by the IUCW, AP 92.1.32, AEG.
[39] Commission consultative de l'enfance délinquante et socialement inadaptée, 21e Session du Commité executive, Mars 23-26 1955, AP 92.3.156, AEG.
[40] Report presented to the first congress of the UN for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Geneva, May 1955 by the IUCW, AP 92.1.3, AEG.
[41] Emily Baughan, ''Every Citizen of Empire Implored to Save the Children!' Empire, internationalism and the Save the Children Fund in inter-war Britain" Historical Research, 86(231) (2013): 116-137.

replicate the (to them) familiar traditional, aristocratic models of boarding school education, while simultaneously describing them as 'innovative'. In Kenya, as in reformatories across Europe, the norms of elite British education were adapted for the education and punishment of criminal youth and young anticolonial activists.

Although Save the Children and the colonial government used the European rhetoric of juvenile delinquency to describe the problems of Kenyan youth, they believed Kenyan youth had been damaged by lack of authority, but did not marry this with a discourse of parental attachment. Their foremost concern was not the severing of emotional ties between children and families, but how 'modernity' had undermined parental authority. In the tradition of colonial stereotypes of African men, they believed Kikuyu boys lacked discipline, not positive forms of emotional support.[42] Thus, where in Europe, solving the problem of juvenile delinquency hinged on 're-establishing' or mimicking the structures of the nuclear family (itself an invented tradition), in Kenya the challenge was to provide a proxy for tribal authority. Young men eager to participate in a wage economy and educated beyond their tribal elders– could not return to the traditional tribal life. It fell to the state and its allies to provide a new form of authority to juvenile delinquents.[43] Within this framework, the youth 'rehabilitation' schemes of the colonial government in Kenya became a progressive agenda, helping Kikuyu youths adjust to postwar modernity with the help of humanitarian experts and European scientific knowledge.[44]

The colonial government began its relationship with Save the Children by asking Boyce to provide funding and staff for Askwith's flagship project: Wamumu, a prison school for youths convicted of Mau Mau insurgency. The stated aim of Wamumu was "liberal

[42] "Youth Training", November 7th 1954, FCO 141/6269, UKNA; Boyce to Lennox-Boyd, September 27th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[43] D. Emley, "Memorandum on Juveniles", November 18th 1955, AB/2/60, KNA; Leakey, Mau Mau and the Kikuyu, p.105; Carothers, The Psychology of Mau Mau, p.15.
[44] For discussion of the role of the "elder state" in parenting Kikuyu young men, see Ocobock, An Uncertain Age, pp.191-225

rehabilitation rather than punishment".[45] It drew on a mixture of 'innovations' learned from experimental juvenile reformatories across Europe, the traditions of the elite British public school system, and colonial forms of youth education and discipline, including scouting and mission schools.[46] Wamumu's leaders claimed to enable young men to experience what was left of their adolescence uncorrupted by Mau Mau ideology. Football and gymnastics enabled the boys to "blow off steam", whilst learning "co-operation and team-work", which both Boyce and Askwith regarded as the hallmarks of colonial masculinity.[47] Wamumu also sought to equip young men for economic self-sufficiency. Learning trades such as shoe-making, carpentry and mechanics led to given economic independence and thus, as Paul Ocobok shows, "pathways to manhood" that did not depend on land. Wamaumu sought not only to reform individual 'offenders', but to remake the relationship between Kenyan youth, the colonial economy and tribal society.[48]

Based on the success of Wamumu, the Save the Children Fund opened a second rehabilitation project in December 1954. Rather than young men from adult camps, this new project, Ujana Park, would house slightly younger boys, aged eight and up, removed from the streets of Nairobi and municipal gaols, although none of the children at Ujana Park had formal convictions. This was by design: the Save the Children council was concerned that if news got back to Fund's supporters in the United Kingdom that donations were supporting delinquents, the surge in donations experienced at the start of the Kenyan emergency would dry up.[49] Instead, the Fund focused on children suspected of being 'contaminated' by Mau Mau but who

[45] Wamumu Approved School and Youth Camp, Annual Report for 1956, VQ/21/3, KNA; Rehabilitation of Youth, 1956, VQ/21/3, KNA. See also Ocobock, An Uncertain Age.
[46] Tim Parsons, Race, Resistance and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa (Athens OH, 2004), pp.167-171.
[47] Rev. H.D. Hooper, "We're the Wamumu Boys", December 1956 CMS (Church Missionary Society) 279, SOAS; The East African Standard, January 19th 1956, LOC. In 1954, Alec Dixon (future founder of Voluntary Service Overseas) was invited to pilot Outward Bound principles at Youth Detention Camps, FCO 141/6269, UKNA; Christian Council of Kenya, special meeting of the standing committee on rehabilitation, January 3rd 1957, A/4/3, Christian Aid Archives (CA), SOAS.
[48] Ocobock, An Uncertain Age, pp. 191-225.
[49] Mrs Kenny (probation officer) to Colin Owen, December 6th 1955, MCO/LIA 89/2, KNA.

had not been formally charged or sentenced.

Built on the site of the Latanga Prison in a suburb of Nairobi, Ujana Park was a surrounded by high barbed-wire fences and guarded by police. The headmaster of Ujana Park, Edward Turner, was typical of the postwar generation of colonial aid workers. He had fought in both world wars and after 1945 had optimistically turned his hand to tobacco farming in Kenya. Profit margins had been poor and when the emergency started, he summoned his wife, a former social worker, from England and offered his services to Save the Children. He was, in the words of the Nairobi Sunday Post, 'no namby-pamby type with a touching faith in humanity'.[50] Instead, he brought military discipline to bear on the children he described as "the plague of Nairobi, accomplished little thieves and posse of thugs, many of whom were tainted with the Mau Mau doctrine."[51]

When the first boys arrived at the camp in December 1954, Turner described their disenchantment as they saw their new living quarters: ten basic, A-frame huts made from corrugated steel and without windows. The boys built roads in the Nairobi suburb of Karen. There was, Turner explained, "no charity and something for nothing". The boys were earning their keep and being imbued with the work ethic that Save the Children hoped would make them "future working class leaders of the Kikuyu."[52] Like Wamumu, Ujana Park was seeking to build the colonial citizens of the future, who would be integrated into the colonial economy with practical skills, but without the education viewed as a root cause of anticolonial unrest.[53]

Ujana Park's vocational model drew upon a long traditional of colonial education in

[50] "Langata Boys Town for the Rehabilitation of Kikuyu Children", Sunday Post, Nairobi, November 6th 1955, AB 17/66, KNA.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] The fund drew on the work of South African anthropologists such as Ellen Hellman, whose work on detribalising and modernity influenced the Bantu Education Act, a pillar of apartheid law. See E. Hellman, Rooiyards: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slum Yard (Oxford, 1948); Laurent Fourchard, 'Lagos and the invention of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria, 1920-1960', Journal of African History 47(1): 115-137.

Kenya, which privileged practical training over literacy.[54] This model had been used by Save the Children in a series of "work schools" in Eastern Europe after the First World War.[55] In 1948, Save the Children opened its first major education project outside Europe, a "work school" named Serendah just outside Kuala Lumpur in Malaya. Serendah was founded to teach crafts to working-class young men and keep them away from Communist youth leagues during Malaya's emergency. The school was in a flower-lined, well-organized campus with purpose-built workshops and airy dormitories.[56] The haphazardly-constructed Ujana Park was undoubtedly Serendah's poorer, uglier sibling. Indeed, while Serendah was frequently cited as the model for Ujana, the camp in fact far more closely resembled another Save the Children project in Somaliland, the Hargeisa Boys Home. Founded in 1952 to train vagrant boys suspected (but not convicted), of criminality, the Hargeisa Home was a constant headache for Save the Children. Also housed in corrugated iron A-frame huts, Hargeisa boys 'earned their keep' by making sandals and tending to a golf course used by ex-pats. The boys frequently escaped, went on strike demanding payment for the sandals they made, and stole and sold items from the Home.[57] Life at Unjaana Park appeared, to its headmaster Edward Turner at least, more harmonious than at Hargeisa. When Turner's car broke down near the gates in May 1955, "tens of boys swarmed through a large hole in the camp's fence to offer their assistance." To him, this suggested that the boys could have escaped at any point, but chose not to do so.[58]

As in Ujana Park, escapes from Wamumu were rare. On one occasion, three boys

[54] Evanson N. Wamagatta, 'African Quest and Struggle for High Schools in Colonial Kenya, The Case of the Abortive Kiambu Local Native Council Central High School at Githunguri, 1926-34', Journal of Asian and African Studies, 43: 3, (2008): 345-362, pp. 351-353

[55] 'Practical Education for Life' by Julie Eve Vajkai, speech at the World Federation of Education Associations, 1929, EJ.169, Save the Children Archives, Birmingham (SCA).

[56] Nanette Boyce, 'Serendah Boys' Home', *The World's Children*, January 1950; Report from Malaya by Lt. Col. Frank Adams, December 1951, CO 859/229/2.

[57] Report from British Somaliland from John Walting, February 1952, CO 859/229/2; Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Committee, Summary of the Report on work in Somaliland, June 1956, CO 859/659.

[58] Telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya, May 10th 1957, CO 822/1239, UKNA; see also Luise White, "Separating the Men from the Boys: Constructions of Gender, Sexuality, and Terrorism in Central Kenya, 1939-1959", International Journal of African Historical Studies, 23(1) (1990): 13-4.

returned to the camp after a number of hours.[59] Life within the confines of the camps' walls with its beatings and solitary may have seemed preferable to vagrancy on the streets of Nairobi, or adult prisons.[60] Indeed, in the latter years of the Emergency, Wamaumu was 'demilitarized', and the number of guards reduced from 200 to 40. Of the almost one thousand graduates of Wamumu, not a single one reoffended.[61] Wamumu was regarded as the flagship success of the Rehabilitation project.[62]

Through their role in founding and funding two prison schools, the Save the Children Fund contributed to a wider reframing of Mau Mau resistance as an expression of the psychosis generated by a 'tribal' society attempting to come to terms with modernity, rather than legitimate political grievance.[63] Kenyan youth, caught between childhood and adulthood, served as a metaphor for an 'immature' Kenyan society. Working with an internationally-renowned humanitarian organization, the colonial government framed its reforms as progressive and compassionate. Humanitarian intervention leant legitimacy not only to the incarceration of teenage boys, but also to the wider campaign against Mau Mau.

II.

In the early days of the Kenyan Emergency, the colonial government assumed that African men were the drivers of conflict, and that African women were its victims.[64] Prison provision reflected this, with just two of the one hundred prisons founded under the Emergency Act set aside for female inmates, and no 'prison schools', youth camps or formal education

[59] Interviews with four former "Wamumu Boys" appear in Obocock, An Uncertain Age, pp.191-225.
[60] Notes for responses to parliamentary questions, June 1955, CO 822/1239, UKNA.
[61] Parsons, Race, Resistance and the Boy Scout Movement, pp.167-171.
[62] Obocock, An Uncertain Age.
[63] Dane Kennedy, "Constructing the Colonial Myth of Mau Mau", International Journal of African Historical Studies, 25(2) (1992): 243; John Lonsdale, "Mau Maus of the Mind: Making Mau Mau and Remaking Kenya", Journal of African History, 31(3) (1990): 395-6.
[64] Tabitha Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots, pp. 143-145

programmes for women.[65] However, women's participation in Mau Mau upended the long-held stereotype of African female passivity.[66] According to a report filed by the Ministry of Defence in 1954, women were not simply "feeding and harbo[u]ring menfolk", but rather had become the "mainstays" of Mau Mau, acting as spies, runners and combatants.[67]

For the most part, the colonial government attempted to take a "softer" approach to rebellious women, believing that women were more malleable than men, and therefore more likely to respond to rehabilitation efforts outside the prison pipeline. Although over 8,000 women were incarcerated in the prison camps at Gitamayu and Kamiti, most experienced the emergency rural areas.[68] Between 1954 and 1956, the colonial government constructed 854 villages, home to 1,077,500 Kikuyu and Embu people. These new villages were to remake Kenyan agriculture by consolidating small plots of land and enforcing new farming methods, as well as enabling the surveillance of the Kikuyu population.[69] New villages deemed supportive of Mau Mau insurgency were surrounded by barbed wire fences and spiked trenches. Adults participated in daily forced labour, attempting to cultivate the barren landscape. In villages where the population was deemed to have become less supportive of Mau Mau, curfews were lifted and conditions improved. In villages deemed to be in 'active support' of May Mau, food was scarce, disease rampant and punishment severe.[70]

The District Commissioners overseeing the villages quickly realized their inadequacy, fearing that poor living conditions would create resentment and 'give rise to problems far worse than Mau Mau.'[71] Throughout 1955, Askwith wrote to Evelyn Baring, the Governor of Kenya,

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[65] Presley, Kikuyu Women, pp. 165-7; Elkins, *Britain's Gul*ag, pp. 261-2; White, "Separating the Men from the Boys", pp.10-15, 19-25.
[66] Bruce-Lockhart, "'Unsound' minds and broken bodies", p.593.
[67] 'Female Mau Mau Terrorists: a memorandum to the Intelligence Committee', Annexure to the Meeting of the War Council c/349, 30 November 1954, FCO 141/6244, UKNA**;** Tabitha Kanogo, Squatters and the Roots, pp. 143-145
[68] 'Kikuyu Women and Mau Mau', Office of the District Commissioner, 25 May, 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[69] 'Removal of Terrorist's Families', Minute of War Council Meeting c/349, 30th November, 1954, FCO 141/6244; M. Sorrensen, Land reform in the Kikuyu Country, (Oxford, 1967), pp. 110-113
[70] East African Standard, October 20th 1955..
[71] C.J.D. Hooper (East Central Educational Board Officer), memo, c. 1955, CMBS 278, SOAS.

petitioning for increased funding from the colonial government for welfare officers to work with 'Mau Mau infected women' in rural areas.[72] He believed that women and girls on the fringes of Mau Mau would be 'seduced' by the movement if they lacked social status and occupation. As with boys in Ujana and Wamumu, Askwith intended to teach women skills that he believed would make them economically independent and less susceptible to 'manipulation' by Mau Mau men. Teaching women homecraft and mothercraft (skills he assumed would be valued because they would 'help the women get husbands') would show Kikuyu women that the government was 'willing to help them'.[73] Educating Kikuyu women would also create fit counterparts for men rehabilitated by the pipeline process, so that they would not arrive from prison to find that "their wives were as primitive as their mothers had been".[74]

Rather than increasing financial support for rural women, Baring relied instead on Maendeleo ya Wanawake (meaning "women's progress" in Swahili). Founded in 1952, Maendeleo received a small annual grant from Askwith's Community Development Fund, but was largely led by female white settler volunteers. In the long tradition of imperial feminism, Maendeleo was presented as an expression of sisterhood and solidarity between African and settler women, but in reality it was a paternalistic attempt to educate women in Western norms of motherhood and domesticity.[75] In 1954, as the emergency intensified, Askwith sought reinforcement for Maendeleo's activities from the British Red Cross.[76] The British Red Cross had been in Kenya since the First World War, when a branch was founded to raise funds and send supplies to British troops. Patronized entirely by white settlers, the Red Cross had

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[72] Report on the Status of Mau Mau Women, January 1955, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[73] Report on the Status of Mau Mau Women, January 1955, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[74] East Africa Women's League newsletter no.10, 1953, Trades Union Congress Archive, Warwick, MSS.292/967.1/2; "Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Women", Conference held at Probation Headquarters, London, February 5th 1955, CMBS 278, SOAS; Mary I. Shannon, 'Social Revolution in Kikuyuland, Work Camps and Family Resettlement Villages', African World, October 1955, in BAG 200 108, AICRC.
[75] Audrey Wipper, "The Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization: The Co-optation of Leadership", African Studies Review 18 (1975): 99-120; Lynn M. Thomas, Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 97-98
[76] The Provincial Commissioner Central Province requests the assistance of Red Cross Women, February 10th 1955, RCC/1/12/1/37, British Red Cross Archives (BRCA), London.

provided support and supplies to colonial policemen and prison guards in the early days of the emergency.[77] Askwith's plea for support offered the Red Cross an opportunity to extend its work, and recast its vision of imperial duty. Instead of working only for the brotherhood of whites, the Red Cross would now turn its attentions to the Empire's 'less civilized subjects', demonstrating that even at a time of tension between white settlers and Mau Mau, British imperialism was a force for good.[78]

Affiliated with the International Red Cross movement, the Kenyan branch of the British Red Cross was able to draw upon an international network of donors and expertise during the emergency. In April 1955, it recruited twenty-five 'homecraft officers' from Britain to work in the villages of the Central Province, bolstering the efforts of Maendeleo. The Red Cross officers split their time between thirteen villages each, travelling between them in large white Landrovers provided by United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).[79] In addition to leading sewing, knitting and baking classes, Red Cross workers examined children for signs of malnutrition and disease and promoted hygiene through baby-washing competitions. Dirty children were forbidden to participate in games and denied food from Red Cross soup kitchens.[80] The most severely malnourished babies were fed with milk powder provided to the British Red Cross by UNICEF and the US government under the Share Our Surplus scheme.[81] Working under the well-known red cross symbol, the British Red Cross brought international humanitarian resources and international expertise to the colonial crisis.[82]

[77] Report: Kenya, Croix-Rouge Britannique, 1955, BAG 209 108-001, ACICR.
[78] Ibid.
[79] J.R. Gregory to Boyce, December 6th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA; Report: Kenya, Croix-Rouge Britannique, BAG 209 108-001, ACICR.
[80] Report for August to February, 1955-6, Gichugu Division, Embu – Moyra Keating, MOH/12/117, KNA.
[81] Despatches from the Governors of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika and from the Administrator, East Africa High Commission: Commenting of the East Africa Royal Commission (1953-1955), LOC.
[82] The British Red Cross was joined by settler initiatives, such as the East African Women's League: Deanne Van Tol, 'Humanitarianism and Violence: Volunteering in Britain's Gulag in Kenya, 1952-60', paper presented at the University of Exeter, 'Empire and Humanitarianism' Workshop, June 2016.

Most of the twenty-five relief workers who arrived in Nairobi in the middle of 1955 had prior experience working with displaced populations in Central Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War, and then worked alongside the British government in its villagization programme during the Malayan emergency, where they had founded soup kitchens, and led a public information campaign about the benefits of teeth-brushing.[83] By the end of 1953, the British Red Cross stated that their relief workers had met the medical and nutritional needs of almost 400,000 people. Through craft classes intended to build trust and companionship between aid workers and villagers, the Red Cross cast itself as an auxiliary of a wider programme to win over Malayan people, the colonial state and the British imperial cause. [84]

The British response to the Malayan emergency was fought on two fronts. Running parallel to military counterinsurgency was a propaganda war designed to win Malayan 'hearts and minds', a phrase itself famously coined by General Gerald Templar during the conflict. The colonial state also used the term 'rehabilitation' to describe the mixture of propagandizing and torture anticolonial fighters and their civilian supporters were subjected to, framing these practices as medical interventions.[85] It cast anticolonial insurgency as a form of psychological deviance, and imprisonment, propaganda and torture as the cure.[86]

Thomas Askwith, the Kenyan Colonial Commissioner for Community Development, had visited Malayan villages and prisons in 1953 to observe Templars 'hearts and minds' approach to counterinsurgency.[87] In Kenya, Askwith built upon the medicalization of pro-British propaganda that Templar had pioneered. From the outset of the Kenyan Emergency a

[83] Reports for 1954, Mambang Diawan Report, Miss Nares to Miss Sacker, 29 June 1954, RCC/1/31/ 2, BRCA.
[84] British Red Cross Society Annual Report on the Federation of Malaya Branch, 1953, 1983/51, ABRCS; see also Thompson, 'Humanitarian principles put to the test', pp.45-76.
[85] Kumar Ramakrishna, Emergency Propaganda. The Winning of Malayan Hearts and Minds, 1948-58 (Richmond, 2002); Richard Stubbs, Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare. The Malayan Emergency 1948-60 (Oxford, 1989).
[86] Ramakrishna, Emergency Propaganda; Rosemary Wall and Anne Marie Rafferty, 'Nursing and the 'Hearts and Minds' campaign, 1948-58. The Malayan Emergency', in Patricia D'Antonio, Julie Fairman and Jean Whelan (eds), Routledge Handbook on the Global History of Nursing (Abingdon, 2013), 218-236, 230.
[87] Maloba, Mau Mau and Kenya, p.68.

government-led Rehabilitation Committee drew on pseudo-psychological and ethnological work to frame Mau Mau sympathies as a form of psychosis. Prisoners were subjected to deprivation, interrogation and, often, physical abuse. Having passed through this 'pipeline', they were then supposed to confess their crimes, and renounce Mau Mau. Prisoners were then propagandized about the benefits of British rule and perhaps educated for participation in a colonial, capitalist economy.[88] Because Mau Mau was regarded as a symptom of a problem with deep social and cultural roots, rehabilitation via propaganda and education was prescribed for not only prisoners, but the entire society.

In both Kenya and Malaya, the colonial state's discourse of curative rehabilitation chimed with longstanding traditions of the British Red Cross. In early twentieth-century humanitarian vocabulary, 'rehabilitation' signalled the dual medical and moral purpose of humanitarian interventions. After wars and disasters, aid organizations prided themselves on far-reaching interventions that would shape characters and communities for years to come.[89] From 1914, the British Red Cross had pioneered the use of haptic, craft activities as a means to divert and occupy recuperating soldiers in military hospitals. Drawing on Victorian philanthropy, the Red Cross described this craft as 'rehabilitation' because it aided physical and emotional recovery, restoring soldiers' dignity through labour.[90] Such schemes in Europe drew on idealized imaginings of a peasant past, as working-class soldiers were taught to rediscover 'traditional' practices, such as weaving, lacemaking and carpentry.[91]

In 1945, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) made craft projects a central feature its postwar rehabilitation programmes, appointing an army of

[88] Maloba, Mau Mau and Kenya, pp.141-142.
[89] Davide Rodogno, "Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief's Humanitarian Operations, 1918-1929", Monde(s), 6 (2014): 45-64, p.62.
[90] Julia Irwin, Making the World *Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (New York, 2014), pp.153-155.
[91] Emily Baughan, 'International Adoption and Anglo-American diplomacy', Past and Present, 239, 1, 1 May 2018, pp.181-217.

welfare officers to Displaced Persons camps across Europe. These officers were responsible for the material conditions of displaced persons as well as preparing them for life beyond the camps. Through training in 'manual activities and handicrafts', UNRRA sought to provide rehabilitation in the broadest sense, preparing displaced persons to be productive, skilled community members when released.[92] In the Displaced Persons camps, craft activities were used to occupy restless, imprisoned populations, to channel 'nationalist sentiment' that camp administrators worried might create tension between ethnic groups, or be directed at camp administrators.[93] Craft was seen as an acceptable vehicle for tokenized and idealized 'national cultures', expressed through 'traditional' artistic and artisanal practices. It was this belief in the disciplinary function of craft that the British Red Cross carried into Malaya. During the Malayan emergency, based on the UNRRA model for administering Displaced Persons camps, the Red Cross tasked their Welfare Officers with the provision of recreation in Malayan New Villages, primarily through craft initiatives directed specifically at women.[94]

Based on their perceived successes in Malaya, Red Cross homecraft officers anticipated a warm welcome in Kenya, and were surprised by the so-called 'Mau Mau contaminated women', who, in spite of promises of items such as 'brightly coloured threads' and 'used Christmas cards', were 'sullen and uncooperative'.[95] Communal labour was compulsory in each village, and Red Cross workers reported that Kikuyu women would wait until the time of the next visit of a Red Cross Homecraft Officer was announced and then organize group labour to clash with the visit.[96] In one incident, bricks were thrown at two homecraft officers in their

[92] Peter Gatterell, The Making of the Modern Refugee (Oxford, 2013), p.100; UNRRA Educational and Recreational Activities in Displaced Persons Camps in Germany and Austria, October 26th 1946, pp.6-9, S/0524-0043, United Nations Archives (UNA).
[93] UNRRA Educational and Recreational Activities in Displaced Persons Camps in Germany and Austria, October 26th 1946, pp.6-9, S/0524-0043, UNA.
[94] 'On the Red Cross in Malaya, Diary of Lady Limerick's Tour of the Far East', Jan-March 1953, 1594/18, ABRCS.
[95] Daily Telegraph, 23rd March 1957; Lady Limerick's Tour of Red Cross branches, December 1956, 594/27, BRCA; British Red Cross Igembe-Meru report 1956-7, BY/12/118, KNA.
[96] R. Hawking, British Red Cross Society Report, Cucka Division, June 1956, BY/12/118, KNA.

Red Cross jeep.[97] In another, women poured condensed milk they had been given by the Red Cross for their children onto the ground.[98] In the new villages, the death rate of children from malnutrition was 16.4%: refusing milk was a powerful gesture of defiance.[99]

Despite their close partnership with the colonial state, the staff of the British Red Cross viewed their work as impartial and independent.[100] Red Cross Overseas Branch Director Joan Whittington assumed that in Kenya, as in Malaya and Europe, the Red Cross banner would signal the independence of her organization from the colonial state, and Kenyan women would therefore be more open to Red Cross intervention. However, as Red Cross staff were accompanied at all times by British troops, the independence of the Red Cross from the state was not obvious to Kikuyu women.[101] The hostile reception that homecraft workers received was part of a wider resistance to myriad forms of hard and soft colonial power. Red Cross workers, however, did not blame anticolonial politics for women's refusal to participate in 'rehabilitation programmes.'[102] Rather, they claimed that Kikuyu women lacked 'three Ps': pride in themselves, their homes, and their children. This lack of pride meant they could not see the value in the education that the Red Cross was offering.[103] Homecraft officers also believed that Kikuyu women's resistance demonstrated their failure to understand the voluntary ethos that animated Red Cross work, because there was no analogous tradition in their own culture. One homecraft worker commented that Kikuyu women were 'puzzled' when asked to care for children other than their own, and, understandably, disbelieving when they heard that there 'were no poor in England, because everybody cares for one another'.[104]

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[97] Helga Hoppe, BRC monthly report on activities Nyambeni and Igembee Divisions, Meru District, Jan 1956, BY/12/118, KNA.
[98] Lady Limerick's Tour of Red Cross branches, December 1956, 594/27, BRCA.
[99] 'Ill Fed Children a Big Problem in Kikuyuland', East African Standard, November 19th 1955.
[100] Michael Wood to Joan Whittington, May 26th 1954, 1983/54, British Red Cross Archive (BCRA).
[101] Joan Whittington's diary 1954-55, 1983/54, BRCA; J.K. Priest, Nyeri District Report August 1955, PH41/11/4/1, KNA.
[102] Proposed Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Mau Mau women and Girls, CMBS 278, SOAS.
[103] "Singing brightens village life", East African Standard, December 12th 1955.
[104] An interrobang was written in the margin next to this claim. J.K. Priest, Nyeri District Report August 1955, PH41/11/4/1, KNA

Successful 'rehabilitation' of Kikuyu women would entail a wholescale cultural shift, the Red Cross believed, endowing them with pride in homemaking, and concern for the community.

Concluding that the 'rehabilitation of women could not be achieved through friendly cups of tea, sympathy and feeling that all past sins are forgotten', Red Cross workers sought reinforcement from District Commissioners, who made craft classes compulsory.[105] At best, homecraft officers hoped that classes would endow women with individual pride and community spirit. At the very least, they reasoned, the supervised space of the craft class would provide 'innocent recreation' and prevent 'idle gossip'.[106] However, with each Red Cross worker responsible for thirteen villages, the classes had little impact. As Kikuyu men began to return from prison in the middle of 1955, Red Cross workers warned that unreformed women might 're-contaminate rehabilitated men' and urged the colonial government to delay the men's return. Frustrated by their failure, homecraft officers now proposed a form of emotional coercion, arguing that 'joining together as a family unit should be held out as a reward when a certain amount of rehabilitation has been achieved.'[107] In this way, the Red Cross inverted an older, missionary tradition of separating women from men in order to 'protect' the women from forced marriage or clitorectomy.[108] Now, it was the men who were to be held back, to 'protect' them from the 'corrupting' influence of the women.

Despite its efforts to influence the government, the British Red Cross could not control the rate at which men were released from the camps, so homecraft officers identified an alternative means of 'getting at the women': their children.[109] In many of the new villages,

[105] BRC Welfare Report, Gatundu Division, Kiambu District, April 25th 1957, BY/12/116, KNA.
[106] 'Work of the Women's clubs', memorandum, January 4th 1956, PH41/11/4/1, KNA; Christian Council of Kenya, Committee on Rehabilitation, September 6th 1955, CBMS 279, SOAS.
[107] 'Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Women', CMS Conference held at Probation Headquarters, London, February 5th 1955, CMBS 278, SOAS.
[108] Tabitha Kanogo, African Womanhood in Colonial Kenya, 1900-1950, p. 204; Claire Robertson, Grassroots in Kenya: Women, Genital Mutilation, and Collective Action, 1920-1990, Signs, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Spring, 1996), p. 623
[109] Memorandum from the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, requesting the assistance of Red Cross Women, February 1th 1955, RCC/1/12/1/37, BRCA.

children were left unattended while women performed compulsory labour on nearby farms. Many became severely ill or malnourished due to food shortages and unsanitary conditions.[110] Echoing the critiques made by philanthropic elites of poor mothers across time and space, the Red Cross homecraft workers claimed that high child mortality in the villages was simply because African mothers did not care for their offspring. One homecraft worker claimed that it was 'common' to see a 'well fed mother standing next to an emaciated child', unaware that this could be a direct result of the irregularity of the food provision, or the unevenness of the effects of malnutrition on adult and child bodies.[111] To deal with malnutrition, the Red Cross opened Dagoretti Children's Home, a school, orphanage and medical centre for the 'neediest' children of Central Province, imagining the gratitude of Kikuyu women for 'all we are doing for their children'.[112] Mothers were given no choice as to whether their children went into the Children's Home, however, and some children were forcibly separated from their mothers.[113]

Dagoretti quickly became a flagship project for a host of NGOs, attracting funding from missionary organizations, UNICEF and Save the Children.[114] Yet, housing only ninety children, Dagoretti Children's Home did little to address the rapidly rising rate of child mortality in the new villages.[115] Despite this, and the failure of officers to gain the trust and approval of Kenyan women, their work was perceived as an 'outstanding success' by the colonial government. At the end of 1956, Baring proclaimed that "sewing and knitting have done for more for the rehabilitation of Kenyan women and the reputation of the colony than the government might ever have achieved on its own terms."[116] Baring offered to pay the salaries of Red Cross Homecraft officers from government funds, an offer that Whittington

[110] Christian Council of Kenya, Committee on Rehabilitation, September 6th 1955, CBMS 279, SOAS.
[111] 'Ill Fed Children a Big Problem in Kikuyuland', East African Standard, November 19th 1955, MOH/12/116.
[112] Account from the Dagoretti Children's Centre, December 29th 1956 sent to Miss Lacey, CA/A/2/5, SOAS.
[113] Report of the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, December 1st 1955, MOH/12/116, KNA.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Extracts from a speech made by the governor of the Kenya Colony, Sir Evelyn Baring, at the opening of the Kenya Legislative Council, November 13th 1956, CA/A/2/5, SOAS.

gladly accepted. For the British Red Cross, as for the Save the Children Fund, the lines between an 'independent' aid organization and the colonial state were becoming increasingly blurred.

Collaboration between allegedly impartial humanitarian NGOs and the British state was by no means new. An international mixed economy of aid had existed for as long as aid organizations themselves. Founded in 1870 to provide impartial care to military casualties in the Franco-Prussian war, the British Red Cross had acted as an auxiliary of the British army by providing medical relief to soldiers and civilians in twentieth-century conflicts. Created in 1919 to deliver 'impartial aid' to child victims of the First World War in Europe, Save the Children had gone on to distribute state-funded aid during the 1921 Russian famine and a host of humanitarian disasters thereafter.[117] Co-operation during and after the Second World War further cemented pre-existing ties between society and state in the provision of humanitarian relief.[118] Nonetheless, the work of the British Red Cross in colonial emergencies represented a significant departure from earlier activities. They were involved not just in state-sanctioned care for civilian populations, but the containment and punishment of large-scale revolt against British rule. In separating mothers from children, and seeking to make family reunification contingent on how far women enacted European forms of domesticity, the Red Cross endorsed a form of cultural and emotional coercion that has not yet been written into historical accounts of violence at the end of empire.

III.

The British Red Cross and the Save the Children Fund claimed to be internationalist, impartial organizations. Though based in Britain, they were affiliated with international parent bodies based in Geneva: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International

[117] Tehila Sasson, "From Empire to Humanity: The Russian Famine and the Imperial Origins of International Humanitarianism", Journal of British Studies, 55(3) (July 2016): 519-537.
[118] Gerard Daniel Cohen, In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order (New York, 2012), pp.59-61; Jessica Reinisch, ''Auntie UNRRA' at the crossroads', Past & Present, 218 (2013), 70-97.

Union of Child Welfare (IUCW). Neither body had a large operational budget and both focused on discussing and co-ordinating the interventions of their nationally-based affiliates during crises. The ICRC, the IUCW and their worldwide affiliates were avowedly 'non-political', and claimed to work for the 'good of humanity'. 'Impartiality' had never precluded support for British imperialism, and internationalism and imperialism were not viewed as contradictory creeds. Indeed, leaders of the ICUW celebrated the British Empire as a model of international co-operation and brotherhood to which the rest of the world could aspire.[119] When the British-based branches of these international humanitarian organizations stepped in to address the shortcomings of the colonial state, they were attempting to improve the Empire, choosing to perceive it as an empire founded on brotherhood, benevolent rule and the duty of white metropolitan elites to 'civilise' colonial subjects overseas.

When damning critiques of colonial brutality were laid before them by Western anti-colonial campaigning organizations and individual whistle-blowers, the British Red Cross and Save the Children insisted upon both the benevolence of colonial rule and the 'impartial' and the 'non-political' nature of their own work. They saw their role as caring for and ultimately 'curing' young and female Mau Mau sympathizers, rather than questioning the conduct of the colonial government. In March 1954 the ICUW received a series of petitions from the Kenya Committee for the Democratic Rights of Africans, a British anticolonial lobby group. The committee claimed that British policies in Kenya amounted to genocide, and that the only solution to the Kenyan emergency would be granting 'fundamental democratic rights' to Africans.[120] The president of the International Union declined to respond, reasoning that even if he regarded the Mau Mau as a political movement (which he did not), he could not support its aims due to the 'strictly impartial nature' of Save the Children. Tacit support for the colonial government, on the other hand, was cast as 'non-political': it simply entailed 'child welfare

[119] Baughan, ''Every Citizen of Empire Implored to Save the Children!'', pp.116-137.
[120] Frida Laski to SCIU, March 17th 1954, AP 92.68.5, AEG.

work', which was understood as inherently neutral.[121] Even if the Save the Children International Union had opposed the actions of either the colonial government or the British Save the Children Fund in Kenya, it would not have intervened. Its policy was to respect the sovereignties of national and colonial states.[122] This had kept it from intervening on behalf of Jewish children who were victims of the Nazi regime in 1930s Germany, and in the 1950s, from criticising the emerging apartheid regime in South Africa.[123]

The ICRC, on the other hand, had been given a mandate by the 1949 Geneva Convention to transcend sovereignties in wartime in order to ensure that prisoners of war were treated according to internationally agreed standards. The ICRC response to the Kenyan Emergency was certainly more robust than that of the International Council for Child Welfare, and has been the focus of two important studies by Fabien Klose and Yolanda Pringle. As they show, the ICRC regarded Kenyan emergency as a civil war, and demanded access to the prison camps that held suspected Mau Mau.[124] The British Red Cross was affronted by this request and argued that the Kenyan emergency was a rebellion, not a war, and that the 1949 Geneva Convention was therefore not applicable.[125] Reading the work of the ICRC through the archives of the British Red Cross reveals how, for the latter organisation, patriotism trumped humanitarian internationalism.

The British Red Cross thus sided with the British government rather than its own international parent body, both covering up colonial brutality and acting against criticisms of its own work. In private correspondence, ICRC officials claimed that the British Red Cross's President Lady Limerick was either ignorant of the extent of Kenyan suffering and colonial violence – 'unpardonable' – or that she was aware of the extent of suffering but was 'hushing

[121] Thelin to T.W. Boyce, June 21st 1955; T.W. Boyce to G. Mornier, April 5th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[122] Boyce to Thompson, May 27th 1954, CO 859/658, UKNA.
[123] 21e Session du Commité executive, Mars 23-26 1955, AUIPE, 92.3.156, AEG.
[124] Klose, Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence, pp. 61-78.
[125] ICRC Report: 'Kenya, Croix-Rouge Britannique', December 1956; a Private memorandum: 'some confidential observations on the emergency', 1955, BAG 209 108-001, ACICR.

things up (equally unpardonable)'.[126] The ICRC was dismissive of the work that the British Red Cross had been doing in the new villages, noting that the appalling rate of child mortality was rising.[127] The ICRC was even more disparaging of the claims that the British Red Cross had visited detainees in governmental prison camps, suspecting instead that British Red Cross representatives were more interested in the camp guards. 'How much time, do you think', wrote one ICRC delegate, 'would be left to a 'motherly type of Red Cross worker' or a reasonably young and attractive 'Red Cross nurse' for Kikuyu detainees in view of the presence of the poor [colonial police] boys who have had SUCH a hard life'.[128] Noting the divergence between British Red Cross accounts of successful interventions, and journalistic reports of poverty in the villages and torture in the prisons, the ICRC concluded that British Red Cross "did NOT do its duty" in Kenya.[129]

The British Red Cross had, in fact, chastised the colonial government about the sanitary conditions of prisoners, stating that some camps were "unfit even to house animals". In 1954, the British Red Cross demanded that the British government should do "something on the health side of things" to improve conditions, and believed that this advice had been acted upon.[130] British Red Cross representatives who visited the camps did not, however, object to the interrogation and punishment methods used, which oral testimonies and recovered documents would later reveal involved torture, forced exercise, forced labour and routine deprivation of food, water and medical attention. While it is possible that British Red Cross delegates were not fully aware of these practices, a number of its representatives in Kenya felt that "British justice in its traditional form is hopelessly unsuitable in the present situation".[131]

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[126] Senn to Gaillard, "Note from the ICRC Geneva", October 24th 1955, BAG 200 108-001, ACIR.
[127] Senn to Gaillard, "Note from the ICRC Geneva", March 26th 1956, BAG 200 108-001, ACIR.
[128] Senn to Gaillard, "Note from the ICRC Geneva", October 24th 1955, BAG 200 108-001, ACIR.
[129] G. Senn to Miss Oder, Easter 1956, BAG 200 108-001, ACICR.
[130] Extracts from minutes of a meeting of the executive committee of the Kenya branch of the British Red Cross Society, July 28th 1955, RCC/1/12/1/37, BRCA; Diary of Visit of Vice-Chairman to East Africa, 13/1/1957 to 9/2/1957, ABRCS 1594/27.
[131] Miss Spens to Miss Whittington, September 14th 1953, RCC/1/12/1/37, BRCA.

Drawing on racialized perceptions of Mau Mau inmates as unstable and irrational, one British Red Cross visitor claimed that a 'much more rapid form of judgement and punishment is needed if it is to be effective with the Kikuyu' and concluded that 'summary justice' within the camps was reasonable and necessary.[132] Lady Limerick agreed that the 'attacks' on prisons and the pipeline by the ICRC were 'scurrilous and unjustifiable'.[133]

Governor of Kenya Evelyn Baring (whose wife was the president of the Kenyan affiliate of the British Red Cross) drew upon the endorsement of the British Red Cross to argue that further inspection of prisons by the ICRC was both unnecessary and unjustified under the Geneva Conventions.[134] Nevertheless, criticism of Kenyan prisons at Westminster and in the British and international press intensified. In response, the colonial government in 1957 acquiesced to ICRC demands, allowing a visit to the prisons as a 'gesture of goodwill' while continuing to insist that they did not fall under international law.[135] Once the visit of the ICRC was announced, and the reputation of the Empire was at risk, the British Red Cross sprang into action. In the weeks prior to the ICRC visit, the British Red Cross provided additional blankets, medical equipment and clothes to several prisons. British Red Cross leaders helped to plan an itinerary for ICRC colleagues, attempting to stage-manage their visit by suggesting tours of a 'successful' village homecraft schemes, orphanages and youth camps, while avoiding the quarters of injured prison inmates.[136] The ICRC report from the 1957 visit concluded that the prison camps were 'in keeping with humanitarian principles'.[137]

Ultimately, the failure of ICRC probably had much less to do with the British Red Cross

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[132] Ibid.
[133] Diary of Visit of Vice-Chairman to East Africa, 13/1/1957 to 9/2/1957, 1594/27 ABRCS.
[134] Evelyn Baring to Lady Limerick, March 21st 955, RCC/1/12/1/37, BRCA; P. Galliard to Mr. Draper, December 6th 1956, BAG 200 108, ACICR.
[135] General Report on the Mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross to Kenya, February 20th to April 18th 1957, BAG 225 108-001.
[136] Senn to Galliard, October 24th 1955; Galliard to Draper, December 6th 1956, BAG 200 108, AICRC; Barbara Castle speech, Parliamentary Debate Feb 24th 1959 Hansard, vol. 600 no. 64.
[137] 'General Report on the Mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross to Kenya, February 20-April 16, 1957', BAG 225 108-002, ACICR.

attempt to cover up prison violence then it did with what the 'moral boundaries' of the ICRC's own humanitarianism.[138] Unlike the British Red Cross, the ICRC felt no allegiance to the British imperial project per se; however, its worldview was underscored by shared notions of racial and civilizational hierarchy. Despite the antipathy between the two parties, the ICRC and the British Red Cross not only shared a similar understanding of European superiority in Kenya: they also ultimately performed the same function in the Emergency, deflecting and distracting from criticisms of colonial policy.

As public critique intensified in Britain, questions raised in the press or in parliament about conduct in Kenya often centred on the plight of women and children, and could be addressed by citing the 'excellent work' of the Save the Children Fund, the British Red Cross, and various missionary societies.[139] Save the Children and the British Red Cross issued regular ringing endorsements of the colonial government that had (they claimed) ensured that the "emergency has not been allowed to interfere with the long-term welfare of these people", and had instead used it as an opportunity to make "far seeing plans" for education and social reform.[140] Once the ICRC had issued its own favourable report in 1957, it was invoked repeatedly by the British government and the colonial government in Kenya to counter allegations of torture. When, in February 1959 eleven men were brutally murdered at the Hola prison camp in Kenya, prompting international outcry, Lennox-Boyd, the Colonial Secretary, suggested that the ICRC should be invited to visit prisons once again. Having been initially resistant to international humanitarian scrutiny, Lennox-Boyd now recognised its function in legitimating – or at least obscuring – the violent practices of imprisonment.

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[138] Pringle, 'Humanitarianism, race, and denial', p.98.

[139] December 8th 1954, Hansard vol. 535 cc. 944-6; March 20th 1957, Secretary of State for the Colonies, Preparation for parliamentary questions, CO 822/1239; Joanna Lewis, 'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me A Mau Mau, The British Press and the Demoralization of Empire', in E.S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Lonsdale (eds), Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority, and Narration (Athens OH, 2003), pp.235-240.

[140] See for example *The World's Children*, October/November 1954, LOC; Draft Speech for Mr Airey Neave at the Annual Meeting of the Save the Children Fund (1954), CO 859/658, UKNA.

Humanitarian attention to Kenya also provided a compelling narrative of the Mau Mau emergency for the British and international public. When Save the Children launched its Kenya appeal in 1955, it raised more money than in any year since 1921, during its major Russian Famine appeal.[141] Donations to the Red Cross similarly spiked. By donating to the Kenya appeals of these organizations, the British public was given a means to engage with the Emergency while ignoring its broader political context. Both the British Red Cross and Save the Children used images of children almost exclusively in their appeals; as in so many humanitarian appeals, these images served to obscure the broader political context of the Kenyan Emergency. Children were presented as 'victims of Mau Mau', a force that victimized both black Kenyans and white settlers.[142] Public giving to the Kenya Emergency appeals did not simply express support for the colonial government, but also compassion for the Kenyan people. Through the interventions of British-based international humanitarian organizations, the good of the empire and the good of humanity were aligned in the eyes of the British public, and the brutality of the colonial violence was obscured. Kenya became a site of benevolent intervention, rather than political struggle.

Conclusion

When Kenyan women who had been imprisoned returned to their children, many found that their breast milk had dried up. Red Cross homecraft officers provided these women with milk powder purchased by UNICEF.[143] UNICEF milk was keeping child subjects of empire alive, as international aid organizations were in turn preserving the image of a benevolent empire in an era when colonial violence contradicted new international norms. Yet, the mothers who

[141] Bulletin of the Save the Children International Union, No. 60, October-December 1955, LOC.
[142] *The World's Children,* October/November 1954.
[143] Meeting of the Executive of the Save the Children Fund (Kenya), Nairobi, August 22nd 1955, AB 17/66, KNA.

were given this milk for their children did not draw distinctions between the colonial state, the British-led aid organization that distributed the milk, and the UN-affiliated aid organization that funded it. To them, the milk was not a symbol of international compassion, but of colonial control. Pouring the milk on the ground was a gesture of defiance against the state that had moved them to barren land and imprisoned their communities. To colonised communities the lines between the colonial state and non-state aid organizations, and between imperial violence and international aid, were far from self-evident.

Yet, despite these blurred boundaries, the existing literature on humanitarianism has often taken claims of impartiality as a starting point, with both historians and contemporary commentators broadly assuming that aid organizations overcame ethical misgivings in order to collaborate with states, and that collaboration with states was a reluctant compromise made when they could not otherwise access suffering populations. Rather, as we have seen, across the British Empire during its violent decolonization struggles, collusion with the state was an opportunity to expand humanitarian work and uphold a vision of British imperialism they believed compatible to be with international humanitarian ideals. Humanitarian organizations sought to diminish the impact of colonial violence on both civilian populations and the public image of Empire. Humanitarian intervention lent credence to the notion that 'rehabilitation' was a modernising project, drawing on international expertise to aid colonial peoples caught between tradition and modernity. In Kenya, it delegitimised Mau Mau as a political movement, portraying anticolonial resistance as psychosis rather than political grievance. The basis for collusion between humanitarian organizations and the state was this shared vision of the emergency as a crisis of transition between tradition and modernity, and a shared understanding of 'rehabilitation'. This notion rested on invented tradition: an idealized, colonial African past to which Kenyans could be restored, while also benefitting from a modern capitalist economy.

During the wars of decolonization, humanitarian NGOs were not only rewriting the

colonial past, but preserving the empire's future. In the 1960s, territorial colonialism was replaced with 'expert' western aid organizations, as they flocked to recently decolonized states to oversee agricultural, welfare and development projects.[144] Although such projects symbolized new eras of partnership and development, the staff had often gained their experience and ideals through colonial service.[145] Humanitarian interventions would continue to ensure that the ideals of British colonialism remained embedded in postcolonial states. In Kenya, humanitarian interventions that began during the emergency endured long after independence. For example, Dagoretti Children's Home's 'rehabilitation' work continues today, and since 1954 has drawn the support of missionary bodies, national Red Cross committees, the development programmes of a number of European states and local Kenyan elites. In 1964, Dagoretti was celebrated as a 'shining beacon of Harambee' and the 'self-help' agenda promoted by the postcolonial government as a check on Western intervention.[146] Drawing on the model of (and employing staff from) Wamumu, the Save the Children Fund opened the much-celebrated Starehe Boys' School in 1959.[147] Beloved by former colonial officials and postcolonial Kenyan governments alike, the school continues to attract donations from major businesses and NGOs. In 1960, Save the Children appointed the former Secretary of State for the Colonies, Alan Lennox-Boyd, as their president. The unanimous appointment of Lennox-Boyd, who conspired to cover up torture and prison massacres in Kenya, was regarded as a celebration and confirmation of the close ties that the Save the Children Fund had forged with the Colonial Office during the Kenyan and Malayan Emergencies.[148] At the height of colonial violence, and under the auspices of international aid organizations,

[144] Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, 'Introduction', in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (eds.), International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge (Berkeley, 1997), pp.1-33.
[145] Ibid; Timothy Mitchell, Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity (Berkeley, 2002).
[146] The East African Standard, February 20th 1964, BY/12/30, KNA.
[147] Hilton, Charity, Decolonization and Development.
[148] Andy McSmith, "Cabinet 'hushed up' torture of Mau Mau rebels", The Independent, April 7th 2011.

individuals and ideals from the late colonial period became embedded in the social and educational projects of postcolonial states, and the wider structures of humanitarian internationalism.

Rehabilitation was not just a project designed to discredit the decolonization struggles of imperial subjects. In the 1950s, international humanitarian organizations sought to rehabilitate the image of British imperialism in Kenya and across the globe. The collusion of humanitarian organisations enabled the British Colonial Office to meet critiques of colonial violence with assertions of benevolence, but violence and humanitarianism were not separate aspects of British imperialism. In Kenya, self-proclaimed internationalist humanitarian organisations colluded with the colonial state in the incarceration, resettlement and emotional coercion of civilian subjects. Humanitarians did not experience this collusion with the colonial state as a contradiction, but as an opportunity to showcase both their internationally-gathered expertise and the benevolence of the British Empire. By becoming embedded in the apparatus of colonial welfare, aid organisations ensured that humanitarian interventions would be recognised as a lasting legacy of empire, even as the colonial violence that had provided the impetus for these interventions was forgotten.